

Publick Virtue recommended.

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S E R M O N

P R E A C H ' D

In the HIGH-CHURCH
of *Edinburgh*,

On *Thursday*, May 8th, 1746.

A T T H E

Opening of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY
of the Church of *Scotland*.

By WILLIAM WISHART D. D. Principal of the
College of *Edinburgh*.



EDINBURGH:

Printed by R. FLEMING: For A. KINCAID,
MDCCXLVI.



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T O

The Right Honourable,
The EARL of *LEVEN*,

His MAJESTY's

High Commissioner

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY of
the Church of *Scotland* :

This SERMON is most respectfully
Dedicated by

His GRACE's

most obliged,

most humble,

and most obedient Servant,

WILL. WISHART.

The Earl of ALENBY

High Commissioner

TO THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
the Church of Scotland



Presented to the General Assembly
of the Church of Scotland
in the year 1840
by the
Rev. James
Graham

Wm. W. W. W.

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S E R M O N

Preach'd before

The GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

May 8th, 1746.

PSAL. cxxii. 6.---9.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions sakes, I will now say, peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.

THAT I may discourse on these Words, in a Suitableness to the Occasion of our present Meeting, I shall consider the Psalmist as, in them, setting an Example to us; for *whom* our great Concern is to be exercised: What *Blessings*.

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we are to be concerned for, to them, and what *Ways* we are to express this Concern; And, in fine, as suggesting some proper *Motives*, to excite us to it.

IN all which, I mean not so much to take upon me to give Instruction and Direction to you, my *Reverend Fathers and Brethren*; as to offer some Hints, which, by the Blessing of G O D, may be useful to his People here assembled: And that under your Observation and Correction.

To begin then,

I. FOR *whom* are we taught, by the Example of the Psalmist here, to have the most hearty Concern?

THE Royal Psalmist *David*, in praying for the Peace of *Jerusalem*, the Capital City of the Kingdom, under its Name expresses his Concern for the Nation; as is evident from these Words, * *there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David*; i. e. "There is held the supreme Council and Judicatory of the Nation; there is the Seat of the Throne, and the Residence of the Royal Family; and, *peace be within*

thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces;
i. e. to those who dwelt within its Walls,
and inhabited its Palaces; who were capable
of feeling and tasting the Blessings of Peace
and Prosperity.

BUT, as *Jerusalem* was the City which
God had chosen, to put his name there; it was
an Emblem of the Church of God. And
that, in this religious View, it was a special
Object of the holy Psalmist's Concern, ap-
pears from these Words, * *Thither the tribes*
go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimo-
ny of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of
the Lord; and † *for the house of the Lord our*
God, I will seek thy good.

So that the Example of the Psalmist, as
it is applicable to us, calls us to the most
heartly Concern for our native Country, and
for the Church of God, especially among
ourselves.

THAT Society is natural to Men, and ne-
cessary to their Improvement and Perfec-
tion; both the natural Abilities, and the na-
tural Weaknesses of Mankind concur to
shew.

THE

THE Powers we are furnished with; the Affections of our Hearts; the Circumstances of mutual Dependence, in which we are placed; and the Opportunities afforded us, of giving mutual Assistance; do *all* speak us formed by the great Parent of Mankind, not to stand, each of us, by himself; or improve alone: but to be *all* Members of one Body; every Part of which is preserved, and its Welfare promoted, by mutual Aids: To be Citizens of the World, as one common City, under the Divine Government.

BUT, the general Obligations to Kindness, Sympathy, and Help towards any of Mankind, as we have Opportunity; do, in a special Manner, oblige us to bear a Goodwill, and do kind Offices, to those with whom we are joined by special Ties; to whom we have peculiar Opportunities of doing Good; with whom, especially, we enjoy common Privileges, or run common Dangers.

THE Defence of Men's Persons and Possessions against lawless Power, and the securing their Enjoyment of the Means of Prosperity

perity, require that they be formed into particular Societies or States, each under some one Government ; which, whatever its particular Form be, has for its sole End, and should have for its supreme Law, the general Safety and Welfare. Where Men have not the Happiness of *such a Constitution*, they can scarce be reckoned to have a *Country* to be concerned for : But, where they are blessed with it, the Prosperity of that Constitution, and the Welfare of that Society, must be the special Object of the hearty Concern of All its Members.

OUR native Country, then, is not so much that *Spot of Earth* on which we have our Birth ; as that *Society of Men* in Conjunction with whom we are born, under the same Government and Laws ; Laws formed for the Welfare of every Person, as best suits the general Good of the whole Society : Laws by which we are protected and defended, in the Enjoyment of our just Liberties and Properties ; and from which we derive various Advantages, long before we are capable of making any Return, or Acknowledgment for them.

THE

THE true Love of our Country is not a Fondness for any particular and distinguishing Customs, good or bad; but a Concern for its real Welfare: not a feigned Concern; or occasionally-affected, to serve a Turn, or accommodate ourselves to certain Times; like that of *Summer-day-friends*; or those of whom we read, that, when * *the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day, many of the people of the land became Jews, for the fear of the Jews fell upon them*: but hearty and uniform; at *all* Times, amidst publick Calamities, as well as publick Prosperity. It is a special Branch of the Love of Mankind: never to be detached from, far less set in Opposition to, that general Affection, of which it is a Branch.

BUT; as our Concern for ourselves, so our Goodwill to our Neighbours, must be low and narrow; if it is confined to our outward Affairs, and temporal Welfare; and does not (as becomes Creatures formed for higher Enjoyments, and a more lasting Duration) extend to the Improvement and Perfection of our Minds and Hearts; and the advancing

* Esther viii. 17.

of our Happiness not only in this World, but in a better.

THE Propensity of Men to seek after Society, in every Thing ; and their Experience of Benefit from it, in all sorts of Affairs ; do plainly show a natural Obligation upon them to associate for Religious Purposes ; and be mutually assisting to one another in these, their most important, Concerns. And all *voluntary Associations* that are harmless to the Publick, may justly claim the Protection ; if beneficial to it, the Encouragement, of the Laws. Particularly,

WHERE either Nature, or wise Choice and Institution, has brought People together into Societies for other Purposes ; there is Fitness and Propriety of their being jointly exercised, in most grateful Acknowledgments to their common Parent ; and earnest Petitions to the Author of all their Blessings. Besides, that mutual Charity should lead us to thank God for the Blessings Others receive, and to beg of Him the needful Blessings for them, as well as ourselves : There are, in all such Societies, common Blessings, and common Wants ; the Sense of which is most properly

perly expressed in joint Acknowledgments, and Supplications to their great and general Benefactor. There is, therefore, a Natural obligation, not only for Family-worship ; but for larger Societies joining together in more publick Exercises of Devotion ; and in attending on Religious Instruction, which is a Thing of the greatest Importance and Necessity. That every Thing, in such Societies, may be managed in an orderly Way, so as to answer the great Purposes of Religion, and preserve the Manners of the several Members of them conform to its Dictates, will require a particular Discipline ; distinct from Civil Government ; and not of the same magisterial and coercive Kind ; as Religion, from its Nature, must be free from *the Commandments of Men.*

BUT, as the modelling of Religion, and the Worship of GOD, is not absolutely to be left to the Imaginations of weak and corrupt Men ; it has pleased GOD, in all Ages, to take the Direction of this Matter into his own Hands, by express Revelation. Accordingly ; * *God, who, at sundry times, and*

* Heb. i. 1, 2.

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*in divers manners, spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets; bath, in these last days, spoken unto us by his Son; whom he bath appointed heir of all things. * He hath purchased a Church with his own Blood: † God hath raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right-hand; and bath given him to be the head over all things to the church; which is his body, whereof he alone is Head; his Kingdom, in which he alone is King: A Society to be governed only by his Laws; and have all its Institutions of Worship prescribed by him. He has taken Care, it should be preserved an orderly and regular Society; by instituting in it a Government, distinct from that of the Civil Magistrate: So quite different, in its Purposes, and the Methods of its Execution; that these two Powers, in the proper Exercise of their different Functions, can never interfere, or clash: If, neither the Secular Arm interposes with Civil Penalties, in the Affairs of Conscience and Religion; nor, the Preaching and Discipline of the Church be ever prostituted, to serve any other Interest than that of Christ's Kingdom. The Government which Christ hath instituted in*

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* Acts xx. 28. † Eph. i. 20, 22, 23.

his Church, is purely Ministerial *, including no Dominion over the Faith or Consciences of Men ; where the highest Name of Power, and that with which some have made the greatest Noise, is, † in plain *English*, that of *Overseers* : A Government, not confined into the Hands of the Pastors of the Church, (or those who have confined to themselves the Denomination of *Clergy*) but, wherein the Members of the Church have a Share ; as being equally under the Obligation with their Pastors, to *withdraw* themselves ‡ *from every brother that walketh disorderly* : The Weapons of its Exercise are not the Sword or the Axe ; but earnest Exhortations ; serious Admonitions ; and Rebukes *with* all Authority *, (enforced by the Authority of the Great LORD of the Church, without which they may be justly reckoned blunt Thunder ;) and in fine, *withdrawing from*, (or removing from Communion with them, in those sacred Institutions which are the distinguishing Privileges of true Christians) *every Brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the Instructions delivered*

* 2 Cor. i. 24. † Επισκοποι. ‡ 2 Thes. iii. 6.

* Tit. ii. 15.

by the Apostles of Christ. What a Noble and Lovely Society must it be, which is governed by these holy Laws? In which the sacred Institutions of the Son of God are kept pure and intire? * *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God!* Who would not *pray for thy Peace!* Who would not *seek thy Good!*

WE, in these Lands, my Brethren, are *now* blessed with a Civil Constitution, and Form of Government, which is the Envy of other Nations around us; and, I'm sorry I must add, of a Set of factious and infatuated Men among ourselves! A Form of Government, by which we are most effectually secured against the Extremes of Confusion, and Arbitrary Power; and of which we enjoy happy Fruits every Moment of our Lives; A Constitution, under which the Poor Man enjoys his Cottage, by the *same* *Tenure* as the King does his Throne: A Constitution, built upon this Just and Noble Maxim; "That Subjects were not made for Princes, to be treated as their absolute Property,

* Psal. lxxxvii. 3.

“ perty, and descend from one to another
 “ like Cattle, let them be used as they will;
 “ but Princes are made for their Subjects, to
 “ govern them legally and seek their Good.”

WE have a Prince upon the Throne, of
 as great Integrity, Bravery, and Clemency,
 as any that ever adorned one! a true Nursing-
 Father to this Church; whom, for his Mer-
 cy to the Fatherless and the Widows, *Gene-
 rations to come shall call blessed.* * He is bles-
 sed with a numerous Royal Family; afford-
 ing us the most agreeable Prospect of a Suc-
 cession of Princes, worthily and happily to
 sway the Scepter over these Lands! a Fami-
 ly, trained up to all Virtue, and Strength of
 Mind, under his paternal Eye; and by the

* In framing the Scheme, lately passed into a Law, for
 providing the Widows and Orphans of Ministers, &c. in
Scotland; a Part of the Fund was proposed to arise from a
 Tax on vacant Stipends; a great Part of which belong,
 by Law, to the Crown: It was therefore found necessary
 to supplicate his Majesty, to yield so much of His *Proper-
 ty*, for promoting this charitable Design; which Request
 our most gracious Sovereign was pleased very readily to
 answer; not by a bare granting of it; but by recommend-
 ing the Design, in a particular Manner, to both Houses of
 Parliament, as a pious and charitable Design; when it was
 first brought in to these most Honourable Houses. *Vide*
 Votes of the House of Commons, and Journal of the
 House of Lords, *January 24. 1743.*

pious Care of a Glorious Queen, who, in the Character of a Mother, was a noble Pattern to the whole Nation! A Family, that has produced an illustrious young HERO, who is justly the Darling of the Nation; and may well be the Darling of *this Part* of it, in particular! a HERO adorned, in the earliest Youth, with the Wisdom and Conduct of Gray-hairs; as well as the most intrepid Courage and Bravery; and *all* these Virtues excelled by his Affability and Humanity, and the Goodness of his generous Heart! One, whom we may justly look upon as a second *William* the DELIVERER of these Lands, from the threatned Danger of Popery and Slavery!

BUT; it is the Blessing of our Constitution, since the Glorious REVOLUTION, that our Happiness does not depend on so precarious a Foundation as the personal Virtues of the reigning Prince may sometimes prove. His Power is bounded by wholesome Laws, enacted by our own Representatives: And should any future Prince now (who came to the Throne on the Footing, on which the present Royal Family so gloriously fill it) be disposed to act without, or contrary, to these
Laws;

Laws ; he must easily be sensible, how dangerous it would be for himself to adventure upon it.

WHO, that has the Happiness to be a Member of *such* a Society, would not be concerned for its *peace*? Who would not *seek* the *Prosperity* of *such* a Constitution? Who, indeed, that was not quite abandoned, and lost to all Sense of every good Thing and valuable among Men ! Withal,

WE have the pure, the merciful and peaceable, Religion of the blessed JESUS securely professed among us : and have free Access to receive *the Words of eternal Life* from the Mouth of the SON of GOD himself ; and the Records of his holy Apostles. We have a Church settled among us, upon the Footing and Principles on which Christianity was at first planted in the World ; and on which the glorious Reformation, from Popish Idolatry and Superstition, Tyranny and Cruelty, was brought about. We, who are its *Ministers*, claim no Dominion over your Faith or Consciences ; we reckon, that the *Ministerial Authority*, which *alone* we pretend to, is limited, by our common LORD himself,

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to the *teaching* of you to *observe all*, and *only*, these *things which he hath commanded*. The primitive apostolical Plan of the Christian Church is the Model, after which we have studied to form our Constitution and Government. At the same Time; we abhor the mad Schemes of those, who would make any particular Form of External Government so absolutely necessary to the Being of a Christian Church; that they who cannot see, or submit to, its Authority, are doomed by the *Father of Mercies* to everlasting Torments; be their Faith in Christ ever so sincere, and their Submission and Obedience to him ever so cordial and conscientious! A Scheme, not to be mentioned without Horror. The Foundation of our Church-Constitution is laid in these glorious Articles; "That, Christ is the only King and Head of his Church:" That, "God * alone is Lord of the Conscience; and hath left it *free from* the Doctrines and Commandments of Men, that are in any Thing *contrary* to his Word, or *beside* it, in Matters of Faith or Worship:" A Privilege, which would signify nothing; if Men were not *left free* to examine and judge for them-

* Conf. of Faith. C. 20. Sect. 2.

themselves, *what Doctrines* and Commandments of Men *are contrary* to God's Word, or *beside* it in Matters of Faith or Worship. We may mistake, as all fallible Men may; and we never pretended to be infallible: but if, upon such serious Examination as you can answer for to our common Lord, you cannot find any of our Sentences or Decisions really enforced by *thus saith the Lord*, you are heartily welcome to treat them with the Neglect, or Contempt, they deserve; and (for your own Sakes) with no more, neither: but, if they are really so enforced; you must know, that it is at your highest Peril, if you dare to despise them. But,

SURE, *such* a Church may very fairly claim your best Wishes, and most hearty Concern for its Peace and Welfare. And this leads me to enquire.

II. WHAT *Blessings* we are here taught to be concerned for, to our Country, and the Church of God, *Peace*; and *Prosperity*, or *Good*. *

Peace, in the Language of the ancient *Jews*, is frequently used as a general Name,

* Ver. 7, 8, 9.

for all Manner of Blessings : but, when distinguished from other Branches of Happiness, it signifies Quietness, and Freedom from Disturbance, either from without, or from within. Thus, the Peace of the Country signifies, Freedom from Attacks of Enemies without ; and from inward Commotions and Insurrections ; together with that Disaffection to the Constitution, those Jealousies and Animosities, Hatreds and Variances, which are the Causes of them.

OUR gracious GOD has, for a long Time, blessed us, in these Lands with both these Kinds of *Peace*. But, our ungrateful Abuse of this Blessing has, at last, provoked Him to permit our Peace to be sadly rent, both these Ways. After we had been long engaged in a just and necessary War, with the open Enemies of our Country ; and common Disturbers of the Tranquillity of *Europe* : they have, at last, had the Art to stir up Foes in our own Bosom ; whose restless Spite against our happy Settlement has made them tamely give up themselves to do *their* Work ; and thus, at once act the Part of ravening Wolves to their Country, and silly Dupes to its declared Enemies ; even with the mani-

fest Danger of bringing Ruin on their own
 Heads. The sad Fruits of this wicked Re-
 bellion, have been exceeding great and cala-
 mitous; have widely spread; and are likely
 to last long. The more earnestly concerned
 must all true Lovers of their Country be, to
 have our Peace compleatly restored, pre-
 served and established upon lasting Founda-
 tions; and all the Causes of our Disquiet-
 ment and Disturbance cured, or rooted out.
 That *peace may ever be within our walls: **
that there be no tumultuous breaking in, nor
going out; no complaining in our streets: †
That violence be no more heard in our land:
wasting nor destruction within our borders.

AND, not only are we to be concerned for
 the *Peace* of our Country; but its *Good*.
 That general Industry, Honesty and Inte-
 grity may take Place; without which no
 Community can long flourish. That Agri-
 culture and Manufactures may thrive: the
 Poor may be employed in honest Labour;
 and, in that Way, *be satisfied with Bread*.
 That Trade may prosper: may be always
 exercised in such a Way as is for the Good
 of the Country; and managed fairly and
 honestly.

* Psal. cxliv. 14. † Isa. lx. 18.

honestly, without defrauding either the Publick, * or particular Persons, of their *Due*: and particularly, may not be loaded with horrid Perjury, which must bring a Curse upon it; and however perverse Custom may make it be slightly thought of by Men, that awful Sentence must eternally and immutably stand; *the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.*

AND, in order to our enjoying those Blessings, we must be, particularly, concerned for the Preservation of our valuable Liberties; and that excellent Constitution, and Form of Government, to which we owe their Security: that the late wicked Attempt to subvert It, may be improved into a Mean of strengthening it, and an Occasion of our holding it fast. That our gracious Sovereign King *George*, and his Royal Family, may be preserved: and the Crown may long flourish upon his Head; and, on the Heads of his Posterity after him, to latest Generations. That all inferior Magistracies, and all Places of Power and Trust, may be filled with Men heartily well-affected to our happy Establishment; and the Bread
of

* Rom. xiii. 7.

of the Publick not be eaten up by *perjured Traitors*. That *Prosperity* and *Plenty* may be *within our Palaces*: not for the vain Amusement of the Great; but for a Blessing to the Multitude, affording the Means of Subsistence to Numbers; and, as a Security to that Power, for the publick Good, which naturally follows Property. In fine, that general Love and Friendship, and all social Virtues, may take Place; *that righteousness flourish, which exalts a nation*; and a due Regard to God and Religion always prevail. And thus our Concern is led on,

To the *Peace* and *Prosperity* of the Church of God; especially, that Part of it which is planted among ourselves. This is a special Object of the Concern of every good Man. That the Light of the Gospel may widely spread: The Minds of all Men may be so disposed to receive it, and it may enter them with such Force of Evidence, as to overcome all Opposition; stop the Mouths of Gainfayers; and captivate the Hearts of all Men to *its* Obedience: That, for this End, all fair and candid Examination be freely allowed and encouraged; a Thing, which
never

never disturbed the Peace of the glorious Head of the Church, and should never disturb Her's: That there be no Persecution of any, on a Religious Account; no Invasion of the Rights of Conscience: but, all peaceable Subjects to the Civil Government be permitted by *it* to worship God according to their Consciences. That there be no * *Schism* in the *Body of Christ*; no uncharitable Divisions, Suspicions, or Jealousies among its Members; but All † *endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, forbearing one another in love*. For, "the Peace of the Church of Christ is a Manly and Reasonable Peace; built upon Charity, Love, and mutual Forbearance. As for any other Peace, founded upon a Submission of our *Honesty*, as well as our *Understandings*, to weak and fallible Men, it is not the *Peace* of the Church of Christ, but the *Lethargy* of it." The *true Peace* of all the Members of the Church, must arise from an inviolable and close Attachment to its glorious Head; by Faith, Love, and Obedience: This leads not barely to an Outward Peace in the Church; but that Inward Peace,

* 1 Cor. xii. 25. † Eph. iv. 2, 3.

Peace, amidst all Disturbances of the World, which is Christ's *Legacy* to his Disciples, *John* xiv. 27. *Peace I leave with you, &c.*

AND, not only are we to be concerned for the *Peace* of the Church ; but Its Welfare and *Prosperity* *. That Its *Ministers* may be *cloathed with Righteousness* ; and Its *Saints shout for Joy*. That the Seats of Learning may flourish : and may send many forth, well qualified to be Ornaments to their Country, and to the Church of GOD ; to set Truth in the fairest Light, and convince Gain-sayers. That all the Ordinances of Christ may ever be purely dispensed, submissively received and observed : And, under the Dispensation of them, all the Members of the Church, in their several Stations, may improve themselves, and be assisting to one another, in every Thing good and valuable. That Sinners may be converted to GOD and Goodness ; Saints may flourish in the inward Graces of the Holy Spirit, and the Consolations that flow from them. Particularly ; now that it hath pleased GOD, of his great Goodness and Mercy, to restore to us Rest and Peace ; let it be our Concern, that we
may

* Psal. cxxxii. 9.

may be in the happy Condition of the Primitive Churches, upon the ceasing of the Persecution of *Saul*: of which we read, *Acts* ix. 31. *Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Spirit, were multiplied.* These are the Blessings, to our Country, and the Church, for which we are to be earnestly concerned. Now,

III. *WHAT Ways* are we here taught to *exercise* and express this Concern?

I. By earnest *Prayers*. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.* This Duty (when performed in good Earnest; and under a just Awe of the Searcher of Hearts, whom we profess to address) is a special Exercise and Testimony of the *Sincerity* of our Love and Concern. This Way, even they who have *most Power*, may *procure* more Good than, by all their other Endeavours, they can possibly *do*; by imploring the Help of him who is All-sufficient, the Author of all Blessings and Happiness: at the same Time, they who *can do*, or think they can do, little more; may *pray for the peace of Jerusalem*; and, this Way,
at

at least, *seek her Good*. Withal, earnest Prayer is an excellent Natural mean of exercising and improving those good Affections, which belong to a truly Publick Spirit; and, was a Spirit of Supplication *general*, it would greatly promote that general Piety and Virtue; which most directly conduce to the Publick Welfare. Therefore, are we so frequently exhorted to this Duty in Holy Scripture; particularly, by the Apostle, *1 Tim. ii, 1, 2. I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*

THE Subject and Matter of such Addresses and Petitions may be gathered from what has been spoken under the former Head: it is often repeated in our publick Prayers: Let us see to it, that Custom do not turn the Repetition into a lifeless Form. In all our Addresses to GOD, let us seriously consider, to *whom* we take upon us to speak. Let our Prayers for our Country, and the Church of GOD, be frequent and constant: *1 Thes. v. 17. Pray without ceasing.* Let them be fer-

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vent and importunate: *Isa. lxii. 67. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence; and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.* Let them all be offered up in the Name of the * *one Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus*; not contenting ourselves with a formal mentioning of his Name; but exercising a lively Faith on his Mediation, as our great *High Priest and Advocate with the Father* †. In fine, let us see to it, that they be the *Prayers* of reformed and *righteous Men*; which *avail much*; ‡ while the *prayer of the wicked is abomination*.

AND, if we are thus *in earnest*, in praying for the *peace of Jerusalem*; we will not reckon that, by our *Prayers*, we have so devolved the Matter upon God, as to supercede all other Endeavours of our own for that Purpose; but will join with our *Prayers*,

2. *Suitable Endeavours* for the publick Welfare, and the Prosperity of the Church. *I will seek thy good* ||. And here,

(1.) Let all our Endeavours, for such worthy and important Purposes, be *lawful* and *honest*. Good and honest Ends are only to be

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† Tim. ii. 5. † 1 John ii. 1. ‡ James v. 16. || Ver. 9.

prosecuted by good and honest Means. Let
 all our Endeavours for the publick Good be
 managed in a Way of Loyalty to our most
 Gracious Sovereign, and our happy Consti-
 tution. We have a Prince now upon the
 Throne (blessed be GOD) whose amiable Vir-
 tues command our hearty Affection and Re-
 gard: but, was the personal Character of the
 reigning Prince the very *Reverse* of the Pre-
 sent; so long as he rules according to Law,
 * *he is the minister of God to us for good:*
Wherefore, we must needs be subject, not only
for wrath, but also for conscience sake. Let
 us carefully cultivate the true Principles of
 Liberty, Civil and Religious; and teach them
 to our Children: there may be great Hopes
 of doing Good with the rising Generation;
 by seasoning their Minds with good Prin-
 ciples, before they are tainted with bad Ones.
 Again: let all our Endeavours for the Good
 of our Country be managed with a due Re-
 gard to the Laws; to which we owe our Pro-
 tection, and the Security of our Properties;
 to which our Church owes its Civil Esta-
 blishment, and its legal Emoluments and Pro-
 visions: but, especially, in all our Attempts
 for

* Rom. xiii. 4. 5.

for the Good of the Church, let us act with an inviolable Regard to the sacred Rules of Truth and Integrity: Certainly, Lies and Calumnies can never come in more awkwardly, and out of Place; than in pretended *Testimonies for the Truth*.

(2.) Let our Endeavours, for the publick Good, be *constant and assiduous*. That “ we should make our whole Life one continued Train of good Actions; and be constantly passing from one Action to another, that has some Tendency to promote the general Good :” was the noble Advice of a great Heathen Prince *; which may put many Christians to the Blush, and should stir up all our Emulation,

(3.) Let our Endeavours for the Good of our Country, and of the Church, be such as are *proper* for each of us, in our several Stations.

WE, who are *Ministers*, may, by the Blessing of God, do a great deal this Way; by our Doctrine, and Example. If we make it the great Scope of our Labours, not only to inform Mens Judgments, but to gain and form their Hearts; to the Love of the Truth; the Love of God and Goodness; and

* M. Antoninus passim.

and a prevailing Relish for Divine Things; to the Love of their Country; and to every Social Virtue: * *in all things shewing ourselves patterns of good works.* Let it never be said of us, my Reverend Fathers and Brethren, as has been too justly said of some, who have arrogated to themselves the Name of *Clergy*, in other Parts of the World; "that we have, and drive, a *separate* Interest; " opposite to that of civil Society, and the " Community of Mankind:" No: as, by the Grace of God we have been enabled to distinguish ourselves, by acting a worthy Part for our Country, and our King, in these Times of Trial; let us go on, to act an uniform good Part, in the whole of our Ministry and Conversation: that we, and the People under the Influence of *our* Instructions and Example, may go on to show the World, as we have done; that the Imputation of Disloyalty upon the Presbyterians of *Scotland* (so far as it has any Truth in it) means no more than this: " That we have an invincible Disdain to be *Slaves*; and, especially, to enslave our Consciences to *any* " *Mortal*: But we will be the best, and most

zeal-

* Titus ii. 7.

“ zealous, of *Subjects* to a King ruling (as
 “ the Present does) according to Law; and
 “ with a tender Regard to the sacred Rights
 “ of Conscience. ” Again,

WOULD the *People*, of all Ranks, * *fol-*
low after the Things that make for Peace, and
whereby they may edify, and profit, one ano-
ther; each in his Station, would do some-
 thing for the Publick Welfare.

WOULD the Great Ones imitate the Ex-
 ample of the Noble *Mordecai*: who, while
 he lay concealed under the Appearance of
 the meanest Character, made a *timely Disco-*
very † of a traiterous Conspiracy against the
 Life of the King; and, even then, ‡ disdain-
 ed to truckle to an Idol of State, or meanly
 make *his Obedience* to one who was unwor-
 thy of it; * was most deeply affected with
 the Calamities, and the Danger of his Coun-
 trymen; † and improved his Access to a
 Court, to sound plain undisguised Truth,
 and honest seasonable Advice, into a Royal
 Ear: And, when raised to that Greatness
 and Power he well deserved, was ‡ *accepted*
of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the
wealth

* Rom. xiv. 19. † Esther ii. 21. ‡ ---iii. 2. &c.

* ---iv. 1. &c. † ---viii. 13, 14. ‡ ---x. 3.

wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

WOULD those of inferior Stations *be subject to Principalities and Powers, obey Magistrates, and be ready to every good Work* ‡.

IN short, there is not the meanest Servant-man, or Maid, but may do something for the publick Good; and even *adorn the Doctrine of GOD our Saviour in all Things* * ; by performing *faithfully, and with Goodwill* †, the Duties of their several Stations; and thus, *serving the Lord Christ* ‡.

To excite to this Publick Virtue, the Psalmist,

IV. SUGGESTS several encouraging Motives. As,

I. THAT our own Welfare and Prosperity arises from this Disposition. *They shall prosper that love thee.* As, when Calamities become universal, all are, at least, in Danger of being involved in them; so, the Effects of Publick Prosperity usually circulate and spread, till All come to feel them: And the Lover of his Country has, readily, a special Share of them.

BUT,

‡ Tit. iii. 1. * Titus ii. 10. † Eph. vi. 7. ‡ Col. iii. 24.

BUT, sharing in the outward Blessings of *Peace* and *Plenty* is small and inconsiderable, to the inward *Prosperity* they enjoy, in whose Breasts such Noble and generous Affections have the Prevalency : Affections, the Exercise of which gives an *immediate* Joy ; to which the selfish Heart is a Stranger ! a Joy, exceedingly increased, by the Approbation of the conscious Mind ; and by a Sense of the general Esteem Publick Virtue procures ; the deserved Love of those of the same worthy Character ; and, especially, the never-failing Approbation of the Great Parent of Human Society, whom the good Man so gloriously imitates ! What a Joy must it give to the generous Heart, to see the Publick flourish ? to behold Happiness spread around him ! especially, when this is accompanied with the Reflection on his having contributed his little Share to this Prosperity ! *Little* perhaps ; yet *all* the Share he could : How delightful to the Pious Soul to *see the Good of GOD's Chosen* ; to *rejoice in the Gladness of his Nation* ; and *triumph with his Inheritance* ! * And, not only are such generous Affections delightful, when successful :
But

* Psal. cvi. 5.

But even when they carry a Man through a Series of anxious and fruitless Cares, and painful Sympathy; still the Consciousness of the Goodness of his Heart, and the Integrity of his Intentions, gives him great Comfort and Joy. The good Man's sharing in the Calamities of his Country, cannot hinder, or mar, this inward Prosperity: and, even when the View of publick Distress gives him the greatest Pain, the Consciousness of this generous Affection must give him a satisfying Self-approbation. And, as the Cause of Truth and Righteousness, and of the Church of God, shall, certainly, be the prevailing and triumphant Cause at last; to all the true Friends and Lovers of that Cause it shall, *one Day*, be said; * *Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice with joy for her, all ye that mourned for her.* In fine; by the Exercise of these generous Affections, in any Shape, the Soul prospers and improves in those Virtues, by which it is fitted for perfect Happiness, and *Eulness of Joy*, in the most exalted Society. Thus, *O Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee!* while † *the haters of Zion, open*

* Isa. lxvi. 10. † Psal. cxxix. 5, 6.

or disguised, shall *be confounded and turned back* : they shall *be as grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up.*

2. THE Happiness of those in whom we are most nearly concerned is involved in the publick Prosperity. *For my brethren and companions-sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.* If, therefore, we have any just Concern for our own Families, our nearest Friends, or most intimate Acquaintances ; let this lead us to a Concern for the Publick Welfare, and the Prosperity of the Church : for without the general Prosperity ; private Advantages will fade, or be of little Account. Particularly ; if we have any Concern for Posterity ; any tender Affection for our dear Children ; if we would desire that *they* should be happy, and bless our Memories when we are gone ; let it be our Care to have the Blessings we enjoy ; those valuable Liberties and Privileges, Civil and Religious, which our brave and worthy Ancestors have handed down to us, at the Expence of so much Blood and Treasure ; faithfully transmitted to our Posterity. “ That the Love of our Country contains within it the Love of every other Relation,” is an Argument much insisted on, by the great Roman Orator and

E

Philo-

Philosopher. † But, the Psalmist concludes, with a higher Reason for his Love of *Jerusalem*, and our Love of our Country, than could enter into the Heart of an *old Roman*: *Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.* Let us, therefore, consider,

3. WHAT do we owe to the Church of Christ; which He hath redeemed by His most precious Blood? to that Church, by whose pious Care we have been trained up in the Knowledge of the most important Things, and in the most excellent Virtues? Great as the Motive is, to be zealous for the *Peace* and *Prosperity* of our Country; because it secures all the Blessings of a temporal Happiness, to ourselves, and the dearest Objects of our Affection: yet, to a well-disposed Mind, this is of small Account, in Comparison with the Opportunities of cultivating the Temper by a pure Religion; and having ourselves, and our Friends, trained up, by its Means, in such Dispositions of Heart, such Habits of Piety and Virtue, as will make us happy, not only in this World, but through Eternity.

† *Cari sunt parentes; cari liberi, propinqui, familiares: sed omnes omnium caritates patria una complexa est.* Cic. Off. 1. 17.

ERRAT. Page 12. in the Note, put Jan. 24. 1743. after *Commons*.

